



Proposed Reusable Bag Ordinance

Town of Los Gatos

Retailer & Merchant Information Meeting—June 13, 2013

Retailer & Merchant Information Meeting—June 18, 2013

What are the Reusable Bag Ordinance Rules?

- No more free carryout bags.
- 40% post-consumer recycled content paper bags and durable plastic reusable bags can be purchased for 10 cents.
- Washable cloth or canvas reusable shopping bags are encouraged.
- Protective bags used for produce, meat, prescriptions and greeting cards are allowed.



www.LosGatosCA.gov/ReusableBags

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Proposed Ordinance Details

Exempt Stores & Customers

- Dry Cleaners
- Public Eating Establishments
(restaurants, fast food, or any establishment that generates 90% or more revenue from prepared food or drink).
- Non-profit or charitable organizations
- Customers purchasing food with Women, Infant, Children (WIC) or CalFresh/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Programs

Categories of Stores Affected

- Grocery Stores
- Liquor Stores
- Pharmacy/Drug Stores
- Hardware Stores
- Electronic Stores
- Bookstores
- Clothing Stores
- “Any commercial establishment that sells perishable or non-perishable goods included but not limited to clothing, food and personal items directly to the customer.” (Exempting restaurants and non-profits)



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Environmental Impacts

WHY? Water Quality is Mandated



- The Regional Water Quality Control (RWQC) Board has mandated that cities reduce the amount of litter escaping into waterways by 40% by 2014. It is part of our Municipal Permit.
- One strategy identified by the RWQC is for cities to adopt bag ordinances to prohibit disposal, thin plastic carryout bags from retail stores.
- Ordinances work – San Jose achieved an 89% decrease in bags found in storm drains after the first year of the new law.
- Los Gatos' ordinance is similar to other cities, making it easier for retailers to implement and less confusing for customers no matter where they shop.



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Outreach Efforts

Proposed Ordinance

- www.LosGatosCA.gov/ReusableBags
- Letter to impacted retailers
- Retailer Informational meetings
- Consumer informational meetings (TBA)
- Town staff attendance at community events (TBA)

Post Approved Ordinance

- www.LosGatosCA.gov/ReusableBags
- Retailer & Resident Toolkit
- Town staff attendance at community events (TBA)
- Press Release
- Newspaper ads in LG Weekly Times



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Frequently Asked Questions

What constitutes a reusable bag?

- A bag made from cloth or canvas that is machine washable.
- A durable plastic bag that is at least 2.25 mil thick designed and manufactured for multiple shopping reuses.

What constitutes a recycled paper bag?

- Recycled paper bags made of no old growth fiber and a minimum of 40 percent post-consumer recycled content.
- 100% recyclable with words “reusable” or “recyclable” printed on the outside.

Which stores would be affected?

- Any retail establishment selling a good directly to the customer, including but not limited to: **grocery, retail, convenience, pharmacies, farmers markets, clothing, beauty salons, hospital gift shops, video, liquor, pet and hardware stores** in the Town of Los Gatos.

Which stores would NOT be affected?

- Restaurants and non-profit charitable reuse organizations (thrifts).
- Stores providing a service, like a dry cleaner, would not be affected because they provide a service and not a good.
- A combination service and goods establishment like a beauty salon or a car wash selling goods **IS** affected.

What is a non-profit charitable reuse organization?

- Defined as a charitable organization, as defined in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986,.
- A distinct operating unit or division of the charitable organization that reuses and recycles donated goods or materials.
- Receives more than 50% of its revenues from the handling and sale of those donated goods or materials.



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Frequently Asked Questions

When will the proposed ordinance go into effect?

The proposed ordinance has an implementation timeline of January 1, 2014 (**Feedback Needed**).

Would a store have to charge a minimum of ten cents per bag?

Stores must charge a minimum of ten cents, it is up to the discretion of the store to charge more.

Will the bag charge stay at ten cents if an ordinance is passed?

The charge will increase to 25 cents one year after the proposed ordinance is adopted.

Who would keep the ten cent charge?

Retailers would keep the charge to compensate for store outreach efforts, providing paper or thicker plastic reusable bags to their customers and for recordkeeping and staff training.

Would bags used for meat and produce still be allowed?

Yes, plastic “produce” bags, without handles intended to protect and segregate items may be distributed at no charge.

How will a Reusable Bag Ordinance benefit my business?

- Retailers spend \$4 billion annually on plastic bags to provide for free.
- Many customers patronize “Green” businesses.
- Average grocery store will collect \$4,000-\$6,000 every quarter from bag sales.
- Paper bags are not included in gross receipts, no reporting to State Board of Equalization.

What assistance will the Town provide to my business?

- Visits to stores, outreach materials at no cost, education to Los Gatos consumers.
- Town staff assistance via personal visit, email or phone call.



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Questions & Comments

- Visit www.LosGatosCA.gov/ReusableBags
- Contact Town Staff for more information:
CGilmore@LosGatosCA.gov or 354-6822
MRenn@LosGatosCA.gov or 399-5790
- Complete a comment card



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